Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:
Cancel claims 16-20 and 23.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for allocating a resource in a digital network, the method comprising:

using a network planning tool prior to a time of operation of the digital network to define a recommended route ~~change in use of the resource~~;

determining when a route change ~~resource~~ is needed at [[the]] a time of operation of the digital network; and

allocating the recommended route ~~resource~~ at the time of operation of the digital network ~~according to the definition of the recommended change in use of the resource~~.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[2]] 1, wherein a plurality of recommended routes is defined.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, further comprising

defining a priority order of the plurality of recommended routes; and

allocating the plurality of recommended routes at least in part according to the priority order.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein a definition of the recommended route includes ~~the resource includes a service instance having~~ one or more of the

following: source node, destination node, service type, service granularity, maximum delay,

protection type.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 5, wherein a definition of the

recommended route the resource includes routing information.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the routing information includes

equipment needs.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the routing information indicates

whether a route uses a switching matrix.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising

sending the definition of a recommended route resource to a network

management system.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising

sending the definition of a recommended route resource to an Element

Management System.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising

sending the definition of a recommended route resource to a Craft Terminal.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim1, further comprising

sending the definition of a recommended route resource to a control plane.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the recommended

route resource includes a description of a characteristic of an optical network.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising

receiving information generated at a time of deployment of the digital network;
and

using the received information to modify the definition of a recommended <u>route</u> <s>resource</s>.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising

receiving information generated at a time of operation of the digital network; and

using the received information to modify the definition of a recommended <u>route</u> <s>resource</s>.

16 - 20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for allocating a resource in a digital network, the apparatus comprising<u>:</u>

a processor;

a <s>machine</s> <u>computer</u>-readable <u>storage</u> medium including instructions executable by the processor comprising<u>:</u>

one or more instructions for using a network planning tool prior to a time of operation of the digital network to define a recommended <u>route</u> <s>change in use of the resource</s>;

one or more instructions for determining when a <u>route change</u> <s>resource</s> is needed at [[the]] <u>a</u> time of operation of the digital network; and

one or more instructions for allocating the <u>recommended route</u> <s>resource</s> at the time of operation of the digital network <s>according to the definition of the recommended change in use of the resource</s>.

22. (Currently Amended) A <s>machine</s> <u>computer</u>-readable <u>storage</u> medium including instructions executable by [[the]] <u>a</u> processor<u>, for allocating a resource in a digital network, the computer-readable storage medium</u> comprising<u>:</u>

one or more instructions for using a network planning tool prior to a time of operation of the digital network to define a recommended <u>route</u> <s>change in use of the resource</s>;

one or more instructions for determining when a <u>route change</u> ~~resource~~ is needed at [[the]] <u>a</u> time of operation of the digital network; and

one or more instructions for allocating the <u>recommended route</u> ~~resource~~ at the time of operation of the digital network ~~according to the definition of the recommended change in use of the resource~~.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for allocating a resource in a digital network, the apparatus comprising<u>:</u>

means for using a network planning tool prior to a time of operation of the digital network to define a recommended <u>route</u> ~~change in use of the resource~~;

means for determining when a <u>route change</u> ~~resource~~ is needed at [[the]] <u>a</u> time of operation of the digital network; and

means for allocating the <u>recommended route</u> ~~resource~~ at the time of operation of the digital network ~~according to the definition of the recommended change in use of the resource~~.

25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [[25]] <u>24</u>, wherein a plurality of recommended routes is defined.

27. (Original) The apparatus of claim 26, further comprising
means for defining a priority order of the plurality of recommended routes; and
means for allocating the plurality of recommended routes at least in part according to the priority order.